

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0688
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY KABUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 0171

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, NP
SUBJECT: AUDIENCE WITH KING -- VISIT OF PRESIDENT CARTER TO
INDIA

A) KATHMANDU 0169 (NOTAL) B) KATHMANDU 0170 (NOTAL)

1. DURING MY MEETING WITH KING JANUARY 5, I BRIEFED HIM ON
PREISIDENT CARTER'S VISIT TO INDIA. I SAID THAT I FELT IT
IMPORTANT THAT THERE BE NO SECRETS OR SURPRISES IN OUR
BILATERAL RELATIONS AND I THEREFORE WANTED TO SHARE WITH HIM
WHAT INFORMATION WE HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED ABOUT THE VISIT. I
LEFT WITH KING COPY OF NEW DELHI 0039 AND DRAWING ON SECTO 13071,
CONVEYED TO KING PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL GOOD WISHES AND PRESIDENT'S
REGRET THAT HE WAS UNABLE TO VISIT NEPAL BECAUSE OF LACK OF TIME.

2. I THEN SUGGESTED TO KING THAT HE SHOULD SEE VISIT AS AN IN-
DICATION OF PRESIDENT'S DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH AN
IMPORTANT COUNTRY OF REGION AND ALSO TO DEMONSTRATE INTEREST
IN SOUTH ASIA AS A WHOLE AND IN DEVELOPMENT WHICH
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WAS CRITICAL TO WELFARE OF ALL COUNTRIES IN AREA.
IT WENT WITHOUT SAYING THAT IMPROVED INDO-US
RELATIONS WERE NOT AT EXPENSE OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN
REGION AND THERE WERE NO CHANGES IN THE REGIONAL
POLICIES WE HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING FOR THE PAST SEVERAL
YEARS. I CALLED KING'S ATTENTION TO DELHI DECLARATION,
WHAT HAD REAFFIRMED OUR FAITH IN DEMOCRATIC FORM OF

GOVERNMENT, BUT WHICH ALSO RECOGNIZED RIGHT OF PEOPLE TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND OF EACH NATION ITS OWN POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICIES.

3. AS FOR SPECIFIC TOPICS WHICH HAD ARISEN IN DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN US AND INDIAN LEADERS, THE ONE WHICH SEEMED MOST RELEVANT TO NEPAL'S INTERESTS WAS PRESIDENTIAL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN HIS ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION IN WATERS DEVELOPMENT. THIS SEEMED CONSISTENT AND SUPPOORTIVE OF SAME APPEAL WHICH KING HAD MADE IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO RECENT COLOMBO PLAN MEETING IN KATHMANDU. THERE WAS ALSO LANDSAT AGREEMENT CONCLUDED BETWEEN INDIA AND US WHICH MIBHT BE OF BENEFIT TO NEPAL.

4. IN RESPONSE, KING SAID HE HAD READ BOTH DELHI DECLARATION AND PRESIDENT'S SPEECH TO PARLIAMENT AND WELCOMED BOTH. HE WAS NATURALLY PLEASED WITH PRESIDENT'S REFERENCE TO REGIONAL COOPERATION ON WATERS QUESTION. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE AND REALISTIC ONLY IF THERE WERE GENERAL RECOGNITION THAT EACH COUNTRY IN REGION HAD ITS OWN PRIORITIES AND REQUIREMENTS IN THIS AREA WHICH WERE NOT NECESSARILY CONSISTENT WITH THOSE OF NEIGHBORING STATES. IN CONSIDERING WATER RESOURCES, HE FELT IT IMPORTANT THAT EACH COUNTRY IDENTIFY THOSE WHICH IT

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REGARDED AS IMPORTANT TO ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS THOSE THAT CONTRIBUTED TO WELFARE OF REGION AS A WHOLE. THIS APPROACH WOULD PRODUCE BETTER MIX OF BOTH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL BENEFITS AND WAS MORE LIKELY TO PROMOTE TRUE REGIONAL COOPERATION.

5. COMMENT: KING'S OBSERVATIONS REFLECT HIS SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, BUT ALSO NEPALESE CONCERN THAT INDIA AND BANGLADESH WILL VIEW NEPAL PRIMARILY AS SUPPLIER OF WATER AND EVENTUALLY POWER FOR THEIR BENEFIT AND IN ANY REGIONAL ARRANGEMENT WILL GANG UP ON NEPAL TO PROMOTE PROJECTS WHICH WILL BENEFIT THEM MORE THAN NEPAL. IN OTHER WORDS, GON FEELS THAT EACH COUNTRY IN THIS REGIONAL EXERCISE SHOULD HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL STAKE IN OVERALL REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.

END COMMENT.

6. KING ALSO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN LANDSAT AGREEMENT AND HOPED THAT HMG WOULD EVENTUALLY BE INFORMED ON HOW NEPAL COULD BENEFIT FROM THIS ARRANGEMENT.

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